

1 **HOUSE RESOLUTION URGING RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**
2 **IN UTAH'S EDUCATION SYSTEM**

3 2018 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Sandra Hollins**

6 Cosponsor:

7 V. Lowry Snow

8
9 **LONG TITLE**

10 **General Description:**

11 This resolution of the House of Representatives encourages the State Board of
12 Education and Utah's school districts to implement school-wide restorative justice
13 practices in the state's public primary and secondary schools.

14 **Highlighted Provisions:**

15 This resolution:

16 ▶ encourages the State Board of Education and Utah's school districts to implement
17 restorative justice practices in Utah's public primary and secondary schools as a way
18 to help Utah's students stay in school and deal with their challenges in a healthier
19 and more constructive way.

20 **Special Clauses:**

21 None

22
23 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the state of Utah:*

24 WHEREAS, the pressure to do well in school and to comply with the expectations of
25 parents and teachers can create great challenges and increased stress in a student's life;

26 WHEREAS, the necessity and challenge of forging meaningful relationships can add to
27 the difficulties students face;

28 WHEREAS, a student's struggles can be further aggravated by the death of a parent, a

29 divorce, abuse, or other traumatic circumstances and can sometimes lead to problematic
30 behavior in school;

31 WHEREAS, studies show that suspension and expulsion, traditional methods of
32 addressing disciplinary issues in schools, do not make schools safer and result in lower
33 graduation rates and increased rates of involvement in the juvenile justice system, contributing
34 to the school to prison pipeline;

35 WHEREAS, restorative justice is a values-based approach to community building,
36 problem solving, and conflict resolution that is used in schools to build and restore
37 relationships, create opportunities for dialogue, repair harm and transform conflict, and create
38 just and equitable learning environments;

39 WHEREAS, restorative justice enhances school communities by incorporating values
40 of respect, dignity, mutual concern, collaboration, and accountability into the school culture;

41 WHEREAS, restorative justice encourages students to engage in collaborative problem
42 solving, which empowers students and gives them tools to effectively communicate beyond the
43 school setting;

44 WHEREAS, restorative justice, in a school setting, shifts the emphasis from managing
45 behavior to focusing on building, nurturing, and repairing relationships, while retaining the
46 ability to hold students accountable;

47 WHEREAS, restorative justice focuses on the impact of students' behavior on other
48 members of the school community, rather than only on rule breaking, and allows those
49 impacted to find ways to repair the harm and restore damaged relationships, rather than
50 imposing punishment;

51 WHEREAS, studies have shown that restorative justice practices can lead to reductions
52 in problem behavior, improvements in school climate, and increases in student achievement,
53 attendance, and graduation rates; and

54 WHEREAS, there is a continuum of proactive to responsive restorative practices,
55 ranging from community-building circles to restorative conferencing, which are accessible to
56 educators to successfully implement school-wide restorative justice practices:

57 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
58 state of Utah encourages the State Board of Education and Utah's school districts to implement
59 school-wide restorative justice initiative practices in Utah's public primary and secondary
60 schools.

61 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to each of Utah's
62 school districts and to the State Board of Education.